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Issue 2



# THE DIAMOND

“Reading The Diamond together is a great romantic date idea” - Lee Pitts, Staff Advisor

## Students provide a magical night of talent for TX

Danielle Schultz and Joshua Meribole -- Staff Writers, & Janelle Cammenga -- Chief Editor



Photo by Haemi Kim

The audience gasped as the cameras zoomed in. Junior Felix Alcover gestured to his tic-tac-toe board, which now showed, “Wandered. 9 of hearts. Vivid pg. 72.” Over the course of Alcover’s routine, audience volunteers had

chosen words from two different books and pulled a card out of his deck. He had predicted. Every. Choice. The crowd burst into cheers and applause, rising to their feet. It was a TX performance to remember.

Alcover, the champion of the show, won the audience’s hearts with his magic routine. He started learning magic five years ago in Puerto Rico; he never expected to get this far.

“I love doing magic. That’s honestly because I love making people smile,” Alcover said. “I really like to see people light up, or even sometimes make their day with just a magic trick.”

Though no other acts predicted the future, plenty of students showcased their skills at Saturday’s Talent Extravaganza.

Noah Deist, the second-place winner, showed off his drumming skills earlier that night by playing along to a mash-up of popular songs. Although Diest played live looping music at the freshman talent show and NCDC, he stuck with only one instrument for the evening.

Third place went to “Here We Are,” a musical group that included seniors Sophia Shin and Rebecca Groninga, and junior Sam Kim. Inspired by Isaiah 6:8, Sophia composed their

whole song in less than half an hour when she visited Inspiration Hills a couple of years ago.

“I was convicted to write something about the act of surrender, humility and identity,” Shin said. “To be honest, all that mattered to me [about performing] was the fact that I was able to share my song and my story to my Dordt friends.”

Ashley Van Engen started the night by sitting down at the piano and playing Chopsticks—slowly and deliberately. She paused. Then amped up the speed and difficulty of the piece, her fingers pounding the keys while also flying across them.

Both junior Katherine Fictorie and freshman Renae Bruinsma sang solo pieces. Fictorie performed a selection from the Addam’s Family musical, and Renae sang an original composition about a breakup.

Juniors Heather Vander Woude and Mitchell Siebersma swing danced across the stage, combining typical moves with more complex aerals.

Weapons of Brass Destruction, a brass quintet, closed the evening. They started out by playing “Africa” by Toto, then, as they all donned shiny sunglasses, mixed in “Havana.” In their after-

performance interview, they admitted they had gone through several different names (like “Better than Sax” and “Brassholes”) before they landed on their current moniker in the interest of keeping things PG.

It was just fun to watch Dordt students share their talents with everyone, according to emcees Tara Andersen and Hannah Veldhuisen.

“A lot of them were nervous beforehand, but we’re so glad they pushed themselves to do it!” Veldhuisen said.



Photo by Janelle Cammenga

## Dordt cancels classes due to winter weather

Zach Steensma -- Staff Writer

Wednesday, February 7th was a historic day in Dordt history. For the first time in 40 years, Dordt campus closed due to winter weather.

On the afternoon of the 6th, the impending polar vortex with its extremely cold temperatures moved Dordt’s administration to cancel the next day’s classes.

In an email to Dordt students, faculty and staff, Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer Howard Wilson made the historic declaration that all of campus would be closed from Tuesday night through Thursday morning, with the exception of the Dining Hall, which offered two meals, and the Campus Center, noting that all classes and co-curriculars were cancelled for the entirety of the day.

Wilson cited the severe cold conditions and risk of frostbite in his announcement. At the time of cancellation, there were predictions of temperatures as low as minus 26 Fahrenheit (minus 54 with wind chill).

Every other school in the area was also closed, including Northwestern College.

In the days leading up to the cancellation, rumors circled around campus. A change.org petition—directed at administration—which expressed a desire to cancel classes garnered social media attention. The petition managed to drum up 789 online signatures.

Dordt Freshman Hannah Adams created the petition.

“Honestly, it started out as a joke,” Adams said. “I had been in and out of the cold all day and with the forecast what it was for Wednesday, I was absolutely dreading classes.” That’s when Adams made the online petition and sent it to a few of her friends. By Monday night, it had already garnered over 300 signatures.

Adams says she sent the link to a number of

Dordt meme pages on Instagram hoping to rally support.

“Hearing the other students who really wanted it to work made me really want it to work,” she said.

Whether or not the petition had any actual influence on the final decision is unclear.

“This month, two separate individuals completed successful unsupported crossings of Antarctica,” Wilson said in his announcement. “Most of us haven’t had that level of preparation...we want you to keep all your fingers, toes and ears.”



Photo from Dordt Facebook page

## Business Club losing sales

Joshua Meribole -- Staff Writer

The queue of the Bunsen Brew and the 55th have been places where students stay to wait for their coffee and the white-painted cinnamon rolls. And to business students, according to Professor Tim Klein, the faculty advisor for the club, they are the places where students can practice what they have learned in classes.

“The reason in having two coffee shops is not about making money, but for serving the student body here,” said Tony Zou, who has been the club’s accountant for nearly three years.

Business students also get the opportunity each year to visit other business and learn from how they operate.

“It offers you a unique insight on how to run a small business...it would be a very valuable experience for me if later on I want to run my own business,” Zou said.

However, the new school year has provided the business club with a new challenge: declining sales in the 55th.

The Bunsen brew, or “the convenient stop,” as described by Bethan Van Eps, the Managerial co-president, is doing well. It is responsible for a very large majority of the revenue the business club makes.

Over the last year, the traffic, or the students that buy from the 55th, have dwindled. The attempts by the business club to increase the amount of students buying from the 55th have not worked.

Last Semester, the business club increased how long the 55th was to stay open as a way to increase sales, as well as trying to have more events. Yet, despite the efforts, sales in the 55th have remained low.

“We are trying to find what role the 55th plays in campus culture,” Van Eps said. “55th doesn’t have a role, we have tried so many and none of them have worked.”

“We are working as a whole club to try and fix

that situation,” Zou said.

To date, they are looking for solutions that will encourage more students to visit and buy their drinks and smoothies.

“It’s making me deal with the real frustration aspect of a business, meaning it just doesn’t always work out. What you think will work doesn’t,” Van Eps said.

But the students have not given up.

Some of the reasons that were given for the reduction in business is not definitive, but Van Eps suggested that student willingness to go to other places around Sioux Center to buy their coffee has increased.

However, another thing that is being looked at is how much the bookstore has impacted their sales. In previous years, the Dordt Bookstore did not take Defender Dollars, but recently, towards the end of the semester, students can now buy from the Bookstore with their Dordt-sanctioned currency. The question remains on whether or not this has impacted the sales of the Business Club due to the possibly fewer amount of Dollars in circulation.

“We have looked into the historical data to try to figure out what we can improve. We are trying to find out why and what we can do to fix it, it’s hard,” says Zou.

Although the decline in sales in the 55th is a problem, “it’s a learning experience,” says Professor Klein. “It shows what to do when competition arises and how you respond.”

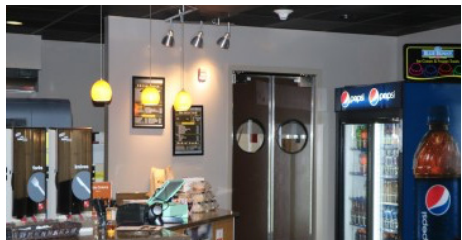


Photo by Joshua Meribole



# Campus construction continues

*Evangeline Colarossi -- Staff Writer*

Manufacturing and Engineering students returned from Christmas break to a surprise addition in the high bay of the science building. Construction workers closed an opening to form a classroom that serves as the new Manufacturing Technology Lab. The lab holds 24 students where they can have hands-on experience with instrumentation workstations. These stations are fitted with computers, gauges, and pumps. Two ground-floor rooms were repurposed, and equipment was added to instruct students on control systems. In less than a week, the silence that students have grown used to will disappear. The New World Theatre and Scene Shop start demolition

on February 17th. The floors and electrical wiring have been removed from the now gutted New World Theatre. Dordt’s original gymnasium and chapel were housed in the New World Theatre and the Scene Shop once served as the commons. The areas will be reconstructed again to make room for the Nursing addition. The new theatre building is now completely closed in and heated. Some props have already been moved to the new building, but a majority of the moving will take place over spring and summer break. “We were hoping for [the new building] to be finished over spring break, but it doesn’t look like that’s going to happen,” said Jalyn Vander Wal, a senior Theatre Arts major. “Hopefully, over the summer some people can stay and help

move in.” The last piece the Theater Department will put on this semester is Northanger Abbey, which will be held in Te Paske Theatre. Shortly after graduation, the new Theatre building will be completely finished with an end date of May 15th, 2019. Most projects are far from completion, but the Agricultural Stewardship Building north of town has been completely finished. The Pro-Tech and Agriculture majors put the classrooms to use at the beginning of the spring semester. Since the grand opening, the Ag Stewardship Building has hosted about a dozen events. This includes two open houses, meetings for FFA, the Sioux County Fair Board, sixty John Deere dealers, Beef Quality Assurance, and the Agriculture Club banquet.

For now, on-campus construction has been out of students’ pathways, other than occasionally blocked sidewalks. This will not always be the case once the interior of the Nursing building is started. “To the best of our ability, we will keep the path of travel open between the Science Building and the Classroom Building,” said Howard Wilson. “There may be times when that is disrupted, but we are hoping that can happen during spring break.” Skateboarders have enjoyed using the sidewalk protection as ramps, but interior construction can pose more hazards and slow down students’ route to and from class. Dordt students are asked to be aware of the machinery and workers around them, maintaining their own safety.

# Man accused of burning Orange City Public Library’s LGBTQ books pleads not guilty

*Tess Hemmila -- Staff Writer*

Northwest Iowan Paul Dorr has entered a plea of not guilty to burning four Orange City Public Library books containing LGBTQ themes. Dorr is facing one count of fifth-degree criminal mischief, a simple misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum penalty of 30 days in jail and a \$625 fine. On Jan. 19, Dorr electronically submitted his plea of not guilty to the Sioux County District Court. No further court date has been set at this time. On Oct. 19, Dorr posted a half-hour long video to Facebook that captures him throwing the LGBTQ books into a fire around the time of Orange City Pride’s second annual event. In the video, Dorr denounces the LGBTQ community as well as the Orange City Public Library for allowing “shameful and wicked books” in their library. At the end of the video, Dorr reads sections from and then burns four children’s books containing LGBTQ themes: “Two Boys Kissing,” “Families, Families, Families,” “This Day in June,” and “Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress.” “Orange City Library, you won’t be peddling this one anymore!” Dorr said in the video as he dropped a book into the fire. “You should all be ashamed of yourselves and repent.” In an interview with the Sioux City Journal,

Dorr said that he would not reimburse the library for the books he destroyed. According to the Des Moines Register, the Orange City Library has experienced an influx in donations since the book burning video. The library has received over 200 donated books and various GoFundMe pages and Facebook Fundraisers have raised thousands of dollars. Additionally, The Orange City Public Library has faced plenty of community backlash in the last year. The library first ran into community opposition in Feb. 2018, when locals started a petition to separate books with LGBTQ content from the other titles in circulation. The petition garnered national attention and resulted in immense pressure on the library. According to the Sioux City Journal, the library responded by altering their classification system to classify books by subjects and subcategories instead of the author’s last name.



*Contributed Photo*

# Sioux Center passes bond to build new high school

*Yee Lim Shin -- Staff Writer*

With student enrollment rising by 50 students per year over the past 10 years, the Sioux Center School District decided it was time to build another school. The created four-facility solution would allow 500 more students to enter into the school system. Voting for this school to be built was held on February 2nd to decide if the residents of Sioux Center would approve. The bond passed with 76.37% approving and 23.63% against it. This two-year project would lead to a fourth public school building for the Sioux Center students to attend by 2020-2021 academic year. This means Kinsey Elementary would become the Transitional Kindergarten – 2nd grade school building, Sioux Center Middle School would have grades 3-5, the current high school would be grades 6-8, and the new high school would have grades 9-12. “Anyone who owns property in those communities or land is going to have a higher tax level,” Education Professor Timothy Van Soelen said. Because of this, the district brought the bond to the community. “I think the bond passing is a good thing because it’s always good to see a community supporting their education system,” senior education major Julia Brollier said. The bond referendum issued stated the district would cover 37% (\$14.7 million) of the bond while the community would cover 63% (\$24.9

million). This means residents would see a maximum of 37 cents per \$1000 of taxation valuation, or an increase of \$40 a year for an average household—52 cents per acre of land. “[Education is] probably the place where things like values and work ethics gets shaped more than anywhere else,” Van Soelen said.



*Contributed Photo*

# Engineering students construct canoe of concrete

*Harrison Burns -- Staff Writer*



*Photo by Harrison Burns*

It’s a brisk April morning at a Midwest lake. Grey sky. Hovering mist. Cold, cold water. Four college students push a fifteen-foot canoe into the silver liquid, two of them leaping onboard with long paddles. But this is not an ordinary canoe. This canoe is made completely out of concrete. After two semesters of preparation, the canoe is about to be tested against twelve other concrete canoes, built by engineering departments in the region, in an annual race.

Here, in Iowa City, is where juniors Janneke DeBoer and Brendan Bunker will be in April to represent Dordt College with the canoe they began working on in the Fall Semester. The Concrete Canoe competition is a nationwide, college-level event organized by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). The competition offers a simple but difficult challenge—build a canoe out of concrete that can not only float but also race. Dordt’s team is led under the supervision of Professor Justin Vander Werff, who continues the tradition of Dordt’s participation in the event. Vander Werff worked with DeBoer and Bunker at the beginning of the process, helping them plan the necessary steps to ensure not only that the canoe would be completed by the competition’s due date, but also that they adhered to the event’s many guidelines. “Kind of reflective of real life, there are a lot of intricacies involved, not only building the actual [canoe] but the various paperwork, the various design criteria that needs to be met... and documenting it all,” DeBoer said. This precise work is illustrated in the ASCE’s “Rules and Regulations”, a 94-page document detailing the many protocols required for a college’s participation. The Dordt team spent much of the fall semester preparing for these procedures of recording data for dozens

of forms that they will eventually compile and present. “It is a lot easier to do something and forget about it, instead of doing it and then explain not only what you did but why afterwards,” DeBoer said. The team also spent the first months finding vendors for materials they needed. As many of the materials are only sold in industrial sized bulks, finding the right amounts within the engineering department’s budget can be a challenge. After the initial preparation stage, DeBoer and Bunker began independently working on the project without Vander Werff’s direct supervision. Taking time out of their already busy schedules, the two of them work 3-4 hours on Saturdays, and often meet during the week to discuss the future steps. For Bunker, if he is not organizing files or preparing paperwork, his typical routine consists of testing, creating, and perfecting different mixes before the final concrete mix will be poured at the end of February. After snapping on blue latex gloves and a white facemask that smells of musky clothes, Bunker pulls out a large bucket and begins mixing in the many ingredients. He follows notes on the whiteboard that describe the specific amount needed for each material.

The mix is very different from the standard concrete used in sidewalks. Because the goal is create concrete that can float, Bunker adds a variety of lightweight additives. This includes super-light fibers called Micro-Balloons that float into the air after being poured, similar to powdered sugar. These airborne particles are why Bunker breathes through his mask, as they are easy to damage the lungs. Being creative with the [concrete] mix has been one of Bunkers’s favorite parts working with Concrete Canoe. The months of planning and work are about to pay off for the Dordt team, with the final pour date scheduled at the end of February. The mold for the canoe is already complete and looks like the skin of a great white shark. It is covered with a web of tension strings, metal coils that help create a stable structure for the concrete to dry over. The actual canoe will be covered in three different layers of concrete mixes and will require over six people to lift it. The team has decided to name the canoe “Genesis.” After the pour day, Genesis will dry for six weeks, before finally being put to the test. “We’ll roll out the concrete and see if it floats. The moment of truth.” Bunker said. A moment the team is confidently anticipating.



# Just Dancing on the steps of Jacob’s Ladder

Haemi Kim -- Staff Writer



Photo by Haemi Kim

Jacob’s ladder in the Science Building was filled with music and dancers on Saturday night, February 2nd. Why? The Just Dance Marathon, where students could come and go, enjoying themselves and dancing along with the moves.

The rules for the marathon was simple: be careful and don’t get hurt while dancing on the steps, move down a row –the bottom row would move up top – when a song is finished, enjoy dancing to the beat, and show off your best moves when you’re in the bottom row.

College students from a variety of majors gathered to break it down.

“It was so fun to just be silly and let loose,” senior nursing major Holly Hiemstra said. “Having the event in the Science Building was a fun change of scenery and I think people really enjoyed it. Us Dutch kids need to be told exactly what to do when it comes to dancing so this event certainly fit the bill.”

“It was a lot of fun to get to spend some time with people that I know, and to get to know some new people!” sophomore electrical engineering major Colton Ott said.

The music selection during the event had as much variety as the students. Other than the different American pop songs, students also requested songs like “Rasputin”, a German song about the prominent Russian figure, “Spectronizer” from Japan, and “Ddu-du Ddu-du”, “Gangnam Style”, and “Bang Bang Bang” from Korea.

The continuous fast moves sent some students for a water break and a short rest, but after sitting out one or two songs, they got back up to join the rest of the crowd.

“Hopefully they do [the marathon] again; it was great!” Ott said.

# Trump delivers belated State of the Union Address

Caleb Pollema -- Staff Writer



Photo by Andrew Harnik

A week after being postponed due to the longest government shutdown in history, President Donald Trump delivered his State of the Union on Tuesday evening in the House Chamber on Capitol Hill.

The President sought to unify the country and Congress with an agenda that he thought would encourage both parties to unite for what he considers the best interests for America.

President Trump asked both parties to come to the table for comprehensive border reform, the lowering of prescription drug prices, investment in a revitalized infrastructure, and many other bipartisan issues.

Seventy-six percent of viewers approving of the speech, according to a poll from CBS News. Many Dordt students share the same sentiments.

“I thought his speech was pretty professional,” said Dordt sophomore Cole Evans. “He did a great job of recognizing past heroes of our country. He’s had a lot of accomplishments so far and had every right to talk about them, such as arguably the best economy in years and the lowest unemployment rate in our history.”

Trump did ask Congress to spend more money on many agenda items with infrastructure being the most pressing. This can be a cause for serious concern for many.

“I disagree with his statement on infrastructure,” said Dordt sophomore Nathan Psyck. “Our economy is already trillions of dollars in debt, I don’t think that we need to spend another 1.5 trillion on infrastructure.”

Trump touted the nation’s economic successes many times throughout his speech. He also touched on the success of women in the job market, with 58 percent of new jobs in the last year going to women.

“All Americans can be proud that we have more women in the workforce than ever before,” Trump said. “And exactly one century after the Congress passed the Constitutional amendment giving women the right to vote, we also have more women serving in the Congress than ever before.”

This caused men and women on both sides of the aisle to stand in applause and break into loud and harmonious chants of “USA! USA!”

President Trump also acknowledged many of his guests throughout the evening. He saluted several World War II veterans as Americans remember the 75th anniversary of D-Day.

He also recognized Grace Eline, a young girl who has raised over \$40,000 toward cancer research. She has done this in the midst of her own battle with brain cancer.

President Trump sought to unify his Republican base through his comments on veterans and the real moral issue of abortion.

In light of the recent law passed in New York that legalized abortions regardless of the length

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# Why do students drop out?

Erika Buiter -- Staff Writer

Most days, Garth Servis Jr. stands behind the Fruited Plain counter scribbling down orders and whipping up coffees. But today, he’s sitting at one of its tables. Tall, sweater-clad and sprinkled with tattoos, Servis is the very image of a hipster-ish college student--and until last fall, he was one.

First a Theology major, then Secondary English Education, Servis bounced between classes and career aspirations before deciding to leave Dordt. For him, the promised degree at the end didn’t outweigh losing his time and money.

“College is way too expensive to be a guessing game,” Servis said.

Now more than five months removed from college education, Servis works full-time. He’s engaged and plans to move to Chicago with his fiancée. Still connected to the Dordt community, he talks to former professors and is even sitting in on one of their classes. For Servis, struggling through college felt worth it – but after he dropped, he felt relieved, and has no plans to return.

“I don’t think that anyone should feel the pressure of having to go to college,” Servis said. “I think that’s something young people are very pressured into, and if you’re having second thoughts, then there’s no shame in taking one, two or even an indefinite number of years off.”

In 2016, Dordt’s bachelor’s degree graduation rate hit 69.3%. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, average four-year-degree graduation rates for private non-profit schools nationwide sat at 66% in 2016, while public institutions sat at 59%.

Though Dordt’s graduation rate fluctuates between high 60s and low 70s – hitting 73.2% in 2018 -- Servis is part of a consistent number of students who chose to leave.

So what is Dordt doing right?

Every Tuesday, a Student Success Team meets to review academic alerts and assess which

students may be struggling. Jim Bos, registrar, is on the committee.

“We’d love if everybody stayed, obviously, but there’s always going to be students it just doesn’t work out for,” Bos said.

The committee – whose members include residence life staff as well as Dean of Students Robert Taylor – works to connect struggling students with support.

“A student’s best chance for success is trying to establish the opportunity to connect with multiple people on campus,” Bos said.

Even before the Student Success Team takes action, Dordt employees work to set students up for success. Week of Welcome, Core 100 and co-curricular activities work deliberately to put students in situations where they can meet a diverse group of their peers. Amy Westra, associate director of career development, helps provide resources for students with questions.

“The things that we can offer to students in that situation are coaching, assessments and information, and connections,” Westra said. “[A] tool that I use is Jobzology. It takes a couple of those assessments--a personality one, workplace preferences, values, interests—and pulls those together for the purpose of finding career matches.”

But for some students, Dordt just isn’t in the cards. When that’s the case, the team works to help the student exit well.

“I never want to take a student’s money for the sake of taking a student’s money,” Bos said.

For Emily, whose name has been changed to protect her privacy, Bos played a part in helping her exit well in 2017. Today, in-between shifts, she sits on a stool by the Townsquare Coffee House’s expansive front window, brown backpack-purse resting on the wooden bar. Emily recalls her hope that Dordt might be a fresh start after high school – but a combination of severe anxiety, depression and gender dysphoria in her first semester made participating in classes almost impossible.

“It ended up being a perfect storm,” Emily said. “About halfway through the semester I felt like ‘this isn’t right.’”

After speaking with Jim Bos and Robert Taylor, Emily decided to proceed with a medical withdrawal.

“It’s reserved for people who withdraw from classes for a medical reason,” Emily said. “I had to see a doctor to see if I had actual mental issues going on, so I was diagnosed with severe anxiety and depression and started taking medication. For the medical withdrawal, they hold your scholarships, student loans, and if you want to come back, you can. It’s a good process and really good for people who do have those bouts with depression where they can’t participate in school, but don’t want to be stuck.”

Following her withdrawal, Emily moved back in with her parents, and now lives

independently while working in the area. But so far, she’s chosen not to come back – and unlike most students, her path back to Dordt could be more difficult.

Though she entered Dordt as a male student, Emily now identifies as a transgender woman. Her identity is on a list of prohibited conduct on pages 33 and 34 of Dordt’s Student Handbook, which states, “Dordt College specifically holds as unbiblical and therefore prohibited...D. Transgendered Behavior. Adopting an identity discordant with one’s biological sex is prohibited...Dordt College may determine that, as the result of conduct described as prohibited, an individual shall be dismissed from the college.”

Though not a guaranteed outcome, according to the handbook, Dordt would be within its rights to dismiss a transgender student like

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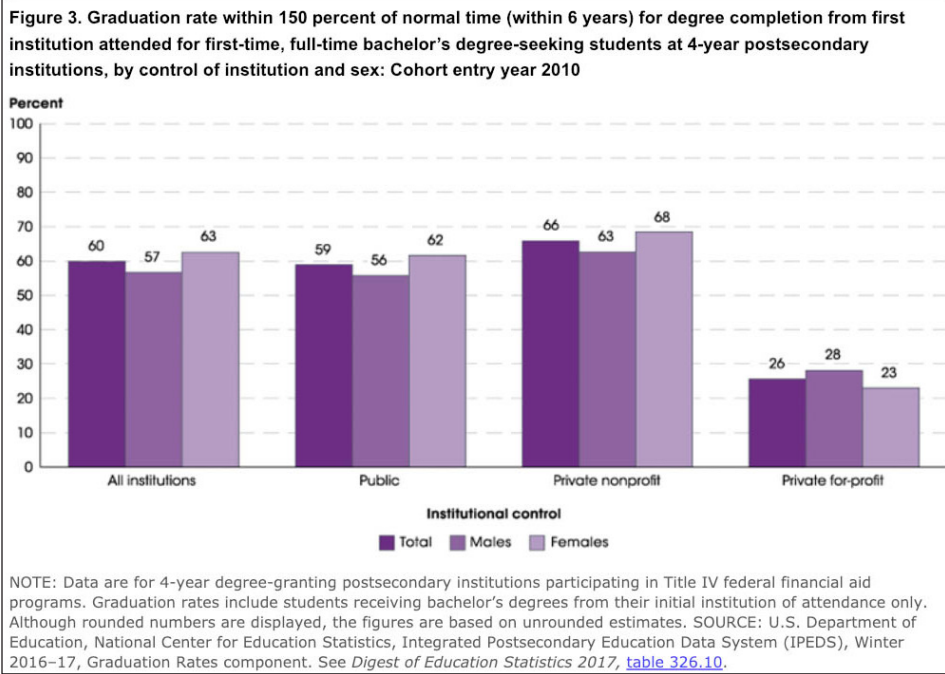


Photo from National Center for Education Statistics



# Robert Taylor: the Dean of Drums

Janelle Cammenga-- Chief Editor



Contributed Photo

If asked, most people on campus could tell you Robert Taylor is the head honcho of Student Services. But far fewer people could tell you exactly what that looks like.

To answer that: As the Dean of Students, he facilitates all non-academic interactions between Dordt students and the college. But that’s just an academic way to say he’s in charge of making sure the Dordt community gets along.

His number one rule? Honest communication. If you want to find him, just walk into Student Services and head down the left-hand hallway, then immediately turn to your right. He might not be in his office, as his days are filled with meetings of all kinds, but if you let him know ahead of time, he’ll make sure to stick around for you.

Dark-bearded (at least in the winter), bespectacled and soft-spoken, Taylor is an attentive listener and a calming presence. He’s the one students turn to in the event of a crisis at college, whether academic, financial, or otherwise. He knows college students are going through a phase of life that can be difficult, and he’s happy to help where he can.

“At the end, for a student to continue when they thought they were going to have to quit,” he said, “or found their way out of whatever tight spot they were in... Yeah, that’s the most rewarding [part of the job].”

But he doesn’t do it by himself. “It takes everyone,” he said, “not just here in this [department]. It takes partnerships with faculty and other staff in order to care for a student that’s in a tight spot.”

Taylor has been full-time on Dordt’s staff for 20 years, starting as a Resident Director, then the Director of Residence Life, and now Dean of Students. But he’s really been in Residence Life ever since he served as an RA during his time as a student—incidentally, a position where he met his wife Teresa, also an RA at the time.

If you happen to chat with him, don’t let his

calm demeanor fool you. The man is full of surprises, as you’ll start to find if you glance around his office.

The walls are decked out in art pieces: Three artist’s proofs from Sam Guiterrez—a good friend from his Dordt days—claim the back wall, and “Judas”—a giant canvas covered in vibrant colors by his best friend Andy Stravers—covers a good portion of the right-hand wall.

If you look to the left of “Judas,” you’ll see a blue poster for “Wister Dean.” One of the guys with glasses might look familiar—after all, this was a band Taylor used to play the drums for. In actuality, it’s one of many bands. He’s done rock, punk, and a variety of other gigs in the past. Band names included Endorphin, Today’s Tomato, the Washups and—of course—Wister Dean, of poster fame.

If you want to see him in his element today, you’ll have to come to chapel on a week when the faculty worship team leads the music.

If you continue your exploration of decorations, you’ll see a piece depicting the silhouette of a bike in motion. This one isn’t so much about the artist as it is what’s on the piece.

Because if it’s not work hours, there’s a good chance you’ll find Robert Taylor cycling. In fact, the first purchase he made after being hired full-time at Dordt was a brand new mountain bike. He says mountain biking is the easiest cardio in the world because you get a great adrenaline boost and can occupy your mind with the twists and turns on the track.

He also started gravel racing since being hired at Dordt. To train for races, Taylor gets up at 4 or 5 in the morning to go on an hour-long ride.

“When I’m out there and it’s dark and stars are out, the sun’s starting to come up... I spend a lot of time just kind of meditating and asking questions of God and trying to be patient and listen,” he said. “We all need some time where everything just kind of slows down and we’re in a place where we can listen. And I’ve found that through cycling.”

Eventually, Taylor aims to complete the 740-mile Trans-South Dakota event.

But biking is not the only avenue where Taylor has goals—he wants to hear more from students at Dordt.

He’s been working with Student Government to set up “fireside chats,” where he would sit somewhere like 55th so students could come and bring their concerns to him. No dates have been officially decided, but they hope to make it happen before the end of February.

“I love what I do here, and I just want to see students do well. And the beautiful thing is: That’s the same thing everybody here is committed to,” he said. “Our leaders here have fostered a culture that says we’ll cease to be Dordt if we don’t work well together, and everybody’s bought in.”

# Dordt competes at PAS 2019

Sarah Widener -- Staff Writer



Photo by Gary De Vries

Twenty-two students and two advisors filled the Dordt bus Tuesday night, as the group headed for Honey Creek, Iowa, to compete in the 2019 Iowa Professional Agricultural Student Organization (PAS) contest.

Wednesday morning saw students waking up early to prepare for group competitions. These group contests covered areas like crop, soil and swine science. Group test results are based off of individual team members’ averages on a 100-question written test and an individual applicable test. Groups of up to three students work together on at least one segment of the test, such as a group case study or presentation. The group testing was then followed by a quiz bowl.

Two Dordt teams won first and third place. Results for the group tests showed the majority of Dordt teams placing in the top three. Students then relaxed for the night at the hotel’s water park.

Day two kicked off with individual tests, ranging from job interviews to agriculture education presentations. Due to the blizzard Thursday night, the advisors deemed it best to stay another night and drive home Friday morning.

Ashley Armstrong, placed third in

agriculture education.

“I was shocked to be the only freshman present,” Armstrong said. “I hope next year more freshman and my classmates will come.”

Friday morning at 6 a.m., students gathered in the lobby to pray for safety and load the bus. They made a pit stop at McDonalds before continuing the six hour trip back to Dordt. Shotgun rider Mike Schouten detected an odd smell and noticed the engine lights going on. At 10:10, the bus pulled over off the interstate. Braden Konynenbelt, Schouten, and Gary DeVries hopped out of the bus to investigate the problem. DeVries remained on hold with AAA for a while before a tow truck and a different school bus was dispatched.

At 11, the school bus arrived to take Dordt students and advisors to the nearest gas station and mechanic shop. From 11 to 3:50, students waited at a gas station for the bus to be fixed. The fuel had gelled and the bus had to run correctly for one hour before it was deemed safe. The Dordt bus made the rest of its pilgrimage back to Sioux Center without incident. At 6:20, the PAS contestants finally made it back on campus.

The Dordt students who qualified at the state level now have an opportunity to compete at nationals. These are set to take place over spring break in Loveland, Colorado.

# Review: The Lego Movie 2

Zach Steensma -- Staff Writer



Contributed Photo

The first “LEGO Movie” (2014) was a visual fantastic filmmaking feat. With clever visual gags, sharp humor, and a heartfelt message, it has since gone on to be held in high regard for its homage to stop motion LEGO filmmakers of the early internet, and its ridiculously catchy title song, “Everything Is Awesome”. For a feature length commercial, it had all the makings of a well-made animated film.

“The LEGO Movie 2: The Second Part” picks up where the last movie left off, with the invasion of DUPLO toys into the city of Bricksburg. In the five years since then, the plastic city has been decimated by the invaders, and all of the minifigure residents of the city have adopted a hilarious Mad Max parody aesthetic.

That is, all except for Emmett (Chris Pratt), the protagonist of the first film, who just can’t seem to change and adapt with the times. His contagious optimism and enthusiasm for life has somehow remained intact, while his best friend Lucy (Elizabeth Banks) grows frustrated with his cheerful antics. Emmett inadvertently

brings the “aliens” back to the post-apocalyptic town, where they proceed to kidnap his friends, sending him on a mission to space to rescue them.

While “The LEGO Movie 2” starts off strong, pulling laughs with the same wit and ease as its predecessor, it loses its bite as the film goes on and quickly turns into an overabundance of self-aware meta humor, an element of the first film that feels overplayed here. Ultimately, the jokes just don’t land as well.

The emotional weight of the movie is also lost to a lack of subtlety. In the first movie, it was revealed at the end of the film what was “really” going on: a young boy, disconnected from his father, playing with LEGO toys in his basement. The entire story was an allegory for his frustration.

In this installment, the human layer of the film is revealed almost right away, and the human characters make much more frequent appearances. It becomes immediately apparent that Finn (Jadon Sand), the boy from the first film, is in a fight with his younger sister, Bianca (Brooklyn Prince) over their LEGO toys, due to their inability to share and refusal to play with one other. While still a clever underlying story with connections to the LEGO world of the kids’ collective imagination, it lacks the impact that it carried the first time around.

Still, there’s a lot to love about this movie. LEGO fans and enthusiasts will no doubt scour the film for Easter eggs of their favorite sets, and the film still manages to entertain with a star-studded cast. Not to mention an abundance of songs that are even more humorous and catchy (or irritating, depending on your mood). It’s no classic, but it’s a fun, family-friendly animated film.

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# The complete guide to Valentine’s Day at Dordt

Zach Steensma, Emma Stoltzfus -- Staff Writers, & Garth Van Donselaar -- Chief Editor

*Fun Ideas if You’re Single:*

Valentine’s Day isn’t just for couples. Here are our top picks for the best activities you can do as a single Dordt student.

**Dordt walk**

We all know how stereotypical Dordt couples stroll through campus hand-in-hand while showing off their deep connection and staring deep into each other’s eyes. With temperatures approaching the single digits and snow in the forecast, it’s time for Dordt singles to take back the Dordt walk.

Gather a bunch of single friends, bundle up, and take a walk around campus. Make sure to stay annoyingly close to any Dordt couples so as to discourage un-Christian-like behavior and dampen any romantic mood. About ten feet or so behind them should be good. If a couple is walking toward you, hold your ground so they have to separate their hands. Loud and obnoxious conversation is a bonus. After an hour or so of annoying others on their own dates, who knows? Maybe you’ll end up with one of your own. After all, you just hung out with several of your single friends on Valentine’s Day—surely one of them will want to go on a real Dordt walk afterwards.

**Spy on couples**

Run out of date ideas? Don’t have a good way to ask someone out? Just spy on other couples and see what they are doing. If it works for them, maybe it will work for you. A few good places to camp out would be the balcony of the B.J. Haan any time after 8:00 p.m., under a desk in the Prayer Room, the West Hall Lodge, Siberia, the computer lab on the 3rd floor of the Campus Center, or just in the Grille area. If you still feel

bad, just remember you haven’t stooped to the lows of making out in the Grille area (seriously, if this is you, please stop).

**Make a post on Dordt Secret Admirers**

Dordt Secret Admirers has been dead for around two years, but certainly your affections are strong enough to bring life back to the now relic of a page. There’s nothing more appealing to someone than telling them you think they’re cute anonymously over a Facebook page. Maybe if you’re feeling ambitious, you can ask their roommate for their number, and text them anonymously. Relationships are tricky, and there’s no reason for you to be so open right off the bat. If you’re not careful, you could accidentally wind up with a stalker.

**Go to Walmart and pick up the discount chocolate and romcoms**

Valentine’s Day only comes once a year, but afterward, big-box retailers will have to clear out their themed inventory to make room for Easter. What better way to capitalize on our capitalist society than to take advantage of the candy clearance sale? On your way out, pick up a rom-com from the five-dollar movie bin, then head back to your dorm or apartment and eat an entire box of truffles while filling your head with unrealistic relationship ideals and fictional scenarios.

Or, if you don’t feel like going out, you could achieve the same effect by just watching Netflix while you cry into a bowl of ramen.

**Take the psych club “Matchomatics Questionnaire”**

As is tradition, the Psych club will be offering its annual matchmaking survey. All you have to do is fill out the questions (honesty is up to you) and then pay a hefty two dollars to see your results so that you can never act on them. Conversely, if you hate anyone on your list,



Photo by Olivia Helmus



Photo by Lexi Cox

dramatically change your personality so you’ll never be matched with them again.

The name of the survey may be a bit of a tongue twister, but it’s just to prepare you for all the tongue twisting you’ll be doing afterward. :)

**Do your homework that’s due Friday**

Better yet, just forget about Valentine’s Day entirely and make this an ordinary Thursday. Get your homework done and stop making such a big deal about it.

*Fun Date Ideas:*

Valentine’s Day is a day of love, and what better way to celebrate than with these super awesome, totally legal date ideas?

**Pull the fire alarms**

Sometimes when you’re with your significant other, things can get steamy, and nothing sets off a fire alarm better than steam. A better alternative to get the heart racing is to just go around pulling the alarms yourself. Not only will you get the thrill of running from the crime scene, but you’ll also get a \$500 bounty on your head. If you get kicked out, you can try more ambitious crimes. Realize your dream of being a modern Bonnie and Clyde.

**Break up & write a song about it**

Sometimes the one you thought could be the one is not the one. It happens. Just remember that your relationship ending isn’t your fault in any way. They said, “it’s not you, it’s me,” so it’s obviously them. If heartbreak has you feeling down, take the Taylor Swift approach and write a song about how you hate your now ex. Maybe perform it for the Dordt Community. If you ever struggle to write more music, just keep breaking up, and the records will sell.

**Propose**

Seniors especially. This is a perfect date idea. Just take a quick Dordt Walk into the prayer garden, or a drive up to Falls Park if you’re really feeling confident and make it official already. Whether you’ve been dating for two years or two minutes, there’s no better way to

indicate how serious and Christian you want a relationship to be than to pull out a ring.

**Romantic dinner at the Grille**

If you really want to show off, you can drop a few Defender Dollars and take your date to the finest establishment in town. Make sure you call ahead to time and make reservations, because this highly sought-after venue can fill up quickly. Best of all, Valentine’s Day falls on a Thursday this year, so afterward you can take them to:

**Praise & Worship**

At a Christian institution like Dordt College, odds are you’ll need to dazzle your partner with your personal faith. What better opportunity than to take them to Praise and Worship after a romantic dinner and sing praise songs with your fellow Dordt students? If you’re confident enough, maybe even hold their hand as you belt out the lyrics to How Great is Your Love or Your Love Never Fails—always remembering to leave room for Jesus, of course.

**Do your homework that’s due Friday**

Relationships are important, but so are your studies. God is watching.



Photo by Daniel Seaman

# Sandra McCracken speaks and sings for First Mondays

Haemi Kim -- Staff Writer

On Monday February 4th, prolific singer-songwriter and modern-day hymn writer Sandra McCracken visited Dordt College as part of the First Monday Speakers Series. Among many other pieces, she wrote “We Will Feast in the House of Zion,” which is often sung at Dordt. In the morning, she presented “A Songwriter’s Journey through the Psalms” and sang few songs on the BJ Haan stage.

Instead of the normal SB 1606 location, McCracken’s evening session came back to the BJ Haan, opening up a free concert for students and faculty. She performed 15 different songs, including songs she wrote, songs she collaborated on and songs she simply liked. She had a similar theme of asking what “your [our] story” was and shared her perspective on how God has shown the path she was walking on.

“First impressions: it was absolutely beautiful!” junior digital media major Elizabeth Eckels said. “She had this warm genuineness about her, and all of her songs had a purpose and a story behind them. I don’t want to sound cliché, but that concert was one of those times where you could feel God moving through us and moving hearts.”

“At first I was not sure what I wanted to think about her music because of her new twist on the Psalms,” said junior fine arts major Allison Wordes, who attended both the afternoon and evening sessions. “As someone who is studying pipe organ and hymns, I didn’t know if a contemporary artist could pull it off. Overall, however, I felt inspired by her music and pulled by her inspection of human emotion. It has changed the way that I see Christian worship music, honestly.”

Wordes also loved how McCracken worked

with her husband, who performed on the piano.

“I thought that Sandra McCracken was very real and open,” sophomore fine arts Danikka Jackson said. “She may have written a popular worship song and has a beautiful voice and all that, but she didn’t seem vain or proud, just casual and willing to admit that things aren’t always perfect.”

The stage was simple: McCracken, two accompanists and the instruments.

“All in all, I found it very refreshing,” Jackson said. “My favorite song was her version of Psalm 42, ‘My Help, My God.’”

The First Mondays Speaker Series aims to bring in a variety of leaders to stretch students’ imaginations and their understanding of this world. This month, McCracken definitely brought the campus the new perspective of a musician and how music can bring the light to this world.

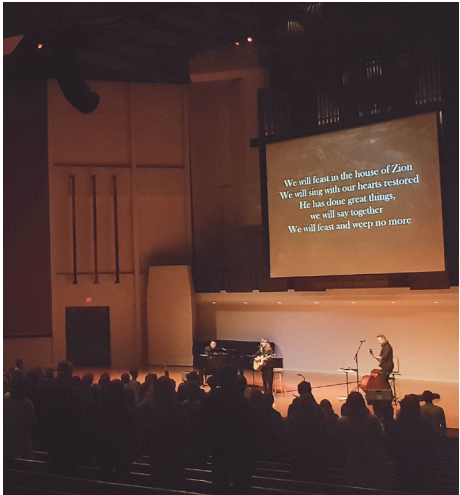


Photo by Haemi Kim



# Swing-dancing pair takes the stage at TX

Danielle Schultz -- Staff Writer

Orange and pink lights flood the BJ Haan stage while audience members talk excitedly with one another. They just saw the first act of the night: Ashley Van Engen on the piano. After talking with the emcees, she walks off stage. They announce the next act.

The crowd hushes as a heartfelt song starts playing. Two figures walk out from separate sides of the stage, meeting in the middle. They clasp hands and walk down the center of the stage towards the audience. The girl wears a red and pink flowered dress over black leggings, while the guy wears a white collared shirt with black dress pants.

Neither one wears shoes—only matching black socks.

Gracefully, they starts to dance. He slowly twirls her inside and out, switching hands effortlessly when needed. When the song picks up speed, so do they, adding jumps, dips and even flips to their performance. Each move earns a cheer from the audience.

The swing dance routine looks well-practiced and second nature, but two weeks ago, juniors Heather Vander Woude and Mitchell Siebersma did not even know they would be competing in Dordt’s Talent Extravaganza.

### The Journey

A shiny wood floor meets a wall covered in floor-to-ceiling mirrors, black mats hanging by each door and bright rows of weights lining the shelves. Everything is silent. It is a Friday in the

aerobics room.

Heather and Mitchell sit on the floor, catching their breath. Seconds ago, they had finished practicing their swing-dance routine for the third time that afternoon. With the competition the next night, they had to iron out all the wrinkles in their performance—which they choreographed an hour before auditions last week.

“We were contacted two days before auditions for variety,” Mitchell says after taking a sip from his water bottle. Because swing dance is just involves putting a known set of moves together in various ways, they were able to quickly create a routine to the song “Healing” by Oh Honey. Heather tried to arrange their sequence of moves to match the lyrics.

Throughout the routine, the chorus signals a series of faster and more complicated moves. The first chorus leads into the floor sweep and toe touch, in which Mitchell spins Heather around on the floor in an arc before she jumps back up, doing the center splits in the air. Then comes the pretzel, which Mitchell describes as a “whirling blender of limbs,” followed by a series of spins called the lariat, the tabletop, and the yo-yo.

When the song beings to reach its climax, Heather and Mitchell perform the boot heel. Heather falls parallel to the floor first one way, then the other while Mitchell supports her with both arms. Then, as she is parallel to the floor, he steps over her while switching hands, gently kicking her back up with his “boot heel” at the end. Heather procedes to complete a backflip

over Mitchell’s arm.

As the last chorus begins, Heather and Mitchell lead with perhaps the most cheered and anticipated move: the fly. Mitchell grabs one of Heather’s arms and legs and swings her around him in a circle. Then the routine closes with the willow, a move in which Heather is suspended upside down in Mitchell’s arms, and ends with a basic dip.

Many of the moves are a practice in trust. Each hand, arm, and leg must go exactly where it needs to in order to pull off the moves. Despite this, it did not take long for Heather and Mitchell to memorize the dance routine—maybe four to six hours total, Heather estimates, over a couple of days.

TX is not the first time Heather and Mitchell have danced together. Three years ago, when Heather was on the Dordt dance team, Mitchell had been her partner for a co-ed routine she had performed. On top of that, they both joined the swing-dance club as freshmen.

As a kid, Heather had learned gymnastics on her own; later, as a sophomore in high school, she became a cheerleader. Mitchell also tried gymnastics when he was younger, and later, when he found out he needed an art credit in high school, he decided to learn ballet. He enjoyed dancing so much that, after graduation, he and some friends took it upon themselves to learn swing-dance.

In basic swing-dance, according to Heather, the girl follows the guy’s lead. However, it is still important to recognize cues. To successfully complete the moves, both dancers must develop

muscle memory. She cites swing-dance as simultaneously relaxing and energizing.

“The point of swing-dance is to make both you and your partner look beautiful,” Mitchell says. “It’s a method of expressing music in a new way.”

And that is what they find themselves doing on stage Saturday night, performing in front of Dordt students and faculty.

### The Aftermath

As the song’s last notes fade away into the air, Heather hangs in a basic dip, supported by Mitchell. The audience cheers and claps, yelling their approval. Heather and Mitchell return upright to normal positions and head over to the empty chairs in the corner, ready to field questions from emcees Tara Anderson and Hannah Veldhuisen. Just like that, it’s over.

They wait through six other acts and two audience-participation games to hear what the judges have to say. The competitors stand in a single file on stage, waiting for the results. The emcees ask for a drum roll.

As the audience roars, Heather and Mitchell stand back with those who did not win. They are not dismayed, though. As Mitchell said earlier that week, “Swing-dance is a fun thing, not a competition.”

“We went out there and did our best and had fun,” Heather said after the stage cleared of contestants. “I was hoping it would be a dance that would be fun for the audience to watch as well.”

# The cons of Canvas

Evangeline Colarossi -- Staff Writer

Students and professors use Canvas for paper submissions, grading, discussion posts, quizzes, and other forms of feedback. While all students at Dordt use Canvas, not all professors do, and the reason for this can be easily misunderstood.

To pass up this convenience and ask students to print assignments instead is not a welcomed thought for students. For students who have multiple classes with professors who require printed work, running out of printer money is common and inconvenient.

“When you get a set amount of money for printing, it can get pretty frustrating to use it all up before the semester ends,” says sophomore Shannon Oostenink. During her first semester at Dordt, Shannon nearly ran out of printer money due to the number of papers she had to print for core classes and KSP 151.

Sometimes paper turn-ins can be easier for professors. Grading lengthy papers that rely on a rubric is not always simple on Canvas. Writing notes in the margins or inserting punctuation is easier with a red pen than creating a new text box for every comment.

Students also face some difficulties with Canvas, especially with viewing their

professors’ comments. There is a place for comments on the entire submission, but there is also a place to view a revised document that professors can markup online. When students fail to find all of the constructive criticism, they are not able to adjust as needed.

Some professors prefer to use other methods of grading like checks, plusses, and minuses on smaller assignments. If there is a way to enter grades like this on Canvas, it is not simple to transcribe these grades into an online rubric.

Some professors choose not to use Canvas as a way to keep their classes’ attention on learning instead of grades. One Canvas feature allows students to enter a hypothetical grade for a future assignment and see how it would raise or lower their overall grade. This can be helpful for students to realize what is attainable, but some professors believe it causes students to fixate on the bare minimum they need to accomplish.

“You’re not studying for the grades, you’re studying to master the material, and a grade is simply a reflection of that,” one Dordt professor said. Even if a class is something that a student isn’t interested in, the professors want students to study and to submit their best work.

# Club Fair: a time to connect and learn

Yee Lim Shin -- Staff Writer



Photo by Yee Lim Shin

On Thursday, February 7, in the Grille Area, around 15 clubs set up for the Club Fair, showing a little taste of what each club was about.

Dordt Student Government hosted the Club Fair to give the 25-30 clubs at Dordt College an opportunity to promote themselves to the student body.

“Throughout the year, we get new clubs who apply,” Student Government Junior chair Staci Seaman said. For some clubs, this is their first club fair because they had formed later in the semester.

Clubs old and new had a chance to discuss

what their clubs were about and the future events they were planning to those who were interested in joining. Since students are more grounded now than at the beginning of the year, they could search for clubs they were interested in and apply for them.

“I found two girls that seemed really interested and a lot of upperclassmen that already knew they wanted to come [to the Cultural Fair],” said Sarah Siglin, the Graphic Designer for Students Without Borders.

The Club Fair was also a time to get to know more about the Student Government itself and what they do at Dordt. Through emailing Student Government, students, especially freshmen, can learn more about what the Dordt campus has to offer.

“Every week we meet with a different department, like Parking, Dining, Housing, Financial stuff and Maintenance,” Staci Seaman said.

Whether it may be a recommendation, idea, or complaint about Dordt’s campus, Student Government is willing to listen and to forward those ideas to the right people.

# Dr. Barnard: life is about not having fear

Justin Banks -- Staff Writer

On September 8, 1987, Dr. Marvin Barnard journeyed 120 miles by bus from the black side of Richmond, VA, to the Virginia Episcopal School. Accompanied by nothing more than a suitcase, Dr. Barnard exited a taxi cab to become one of the first black children ever to enroll in a private boarding school.

As a young child, Barnard witnessed the death of his father, an experience that motivated him to pursue the medical field. He recalls a time when black people didn’t trust white medical professionals.

“If I looked like them, then they would be open to come for medical help,” Barnard thought from a young age.

Barnard was not raised by his biological father. The man that he called “dad” was actually his uncle, although his uncle called him his son. After the death of his father, he did not

recall feeling sorry for himself. Instead, he “felt a desire to move forward. I felt fearless. When he passed, I felt like he breathed manhood into me.”

The day he exited the taxi cab, Barnard remembers being happy. He was ready to start school—ready to show people that he belonged and that people like him belonged.

While attending Virginia Episcopal, he became familiar with and learned to love the school’s honor code. He enjoyed being a part of something bigger than himself.

“I wanted to be a part of the tradition of the school,” he said.

When Barnard was granted a full scholarship to attend Virginia Episcopal, he made it his goal to become the top student in his class. He felt his successes or failures would ultimately impact the way other young African Americans would be viewed in the future, and he was determined to succeed.

After graduating at the top of his class, Barnard went on to Howard University in Washington D.C.

He lives by the idea of a “big dreamer imagination,” which allows a person to go beyond their physical barriers. “Life isn’t about being brave, it’s about not having fear,” Barnard said. While attending private school, he believed he could make a difference in a white community for black people.

Today, Dr. Barnard is a medical doctor for both the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) at the Re-Entry and Sanction Center and the Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program.

He urges others to pursue excellence.

“Identify the thing that gives you a rush, and follow the things that you love.”

Dr. Barnard paved the way for black students, not only at Virginia Episcopal, but for around the country. By showing that black children

could perform equal to or even better than white children, he helped change the way that black students were regarded as humans and as students.



Contributed Photo



# Defender baseball opens season with road trip to Missouri

Caleb Pollema -- Staff Writer

The Dordt baseball team is set to open its season this weekend in O’Fallon, Missouri, with a four-game series against Hannibal-LaGrange University.

The Defenders are looking to their youth this year as the team will replace eight of its nine starters from last year’s team.

“I’m excited to see how our brand-new team will compete together this year,” said senior outfielder Dillon Branderhorst. “Being that we brought 20 plus new guys in this season, it’ll be fun to see what we can do despite not having the chemistry most teams have.”

The team is excited for the upcoming season, especially after practicing since the beginning of the school year. With a lot newcomers, they knew that this fall and winter would be critical in their preparation for the season.

“Losing experience can hurt a lot of teams,” sophomore catcher Cody Veach said. “But for us it drove us in the offseason with workouts and keeps a competitive environment throughout practices and games.”

The Defenders see their youth as a positive advantage, and they are looking to capitalize on their strengths as a team in their nonconference and conference slates.

“Our biggest strength is the athleticism and speed of our team,” said sophomore infielder



Photo by Caleb Pollema

and pitcher, Nathan Psyck. “Getting the chance to play the game I love and compete to my fullest with a great team like ours excites me the most about the season.”

This excitement has brought the team closer as they look to this weekend’s series and road trips to McPherson, Kansas, and Tucson, Arizona, over spring break.

The team will play a total of ten games on their trip to the desert and will end with a four-game conference series against Morningside.

The Defenders will open at home on March 23rd with two games against Doane.

# Super Bowl LIII winners, losers

Sam Landstra -- Staff Writer

With five seconds left on the clock, Patriots quarterback Tom Brady snaps the ball in victory formation and takes a knee. Game over. Patriots: 13; Rams: 3. As the confetti falls, Patriots coach Bill Belichick hugs offensive coordinator Josh McDaniels.

“We’re champs, baby! We’re champs!” Belichick says. On the opposite sideline, Rams wide receiver Robert Woods crouches alone, stunned by defeat.

Despite predictions of a high-scoring shootout between two elite offenses, Super Bowl LIII ended up being the lowest scoring Super Bowl of all time. The 16 total points scored between the Patriots and Rams severely undercut the whopping over/under line of 57.5 set before the game.

Obviously, the Patriots emerge as the clear winners of Super Bowl LIII. However, they aren’t the only ones, and neither are the Rams the only losers. Here’s a look at the biggest winners and losers from the largest sporting event of the year.

## Winner: Tom Brady

The 43-year-old quarterback had a less than stellar performance on Super Bowl Sunday, throwing for 262 yards, no touchdowns, and an early interception on his first pass of the game. In fact, only four of Brady’s 21 completed passes traveled for more than 10 yards in the air.

However, once the confetti settles on the field of Mercedes-Benz Stadium, fans only remember one thing: championships. Despite his lackluster performance, Brady and the Patriots won their sixth Lombardi trophy, tying the Pittsburgh Steelers for most Super Bowl victories by a franchise.

## Loser: Todd Gurley

The young Rams quarterback Jared Goff appeared to be lost in the spotlight on Sunday, overwhelmed by the defensive scheme of Patriots defensive coordinator Brian Flores.

However, Rams star running back Todd Gurley failed to make up for Goff’s poor play, rushing for a mere 35 yards on 10 carries. Gurley’s disappearance in the Super Bowl is not an anomaly either. During the NFC championship game against the Saints, Gurley amounted 10 yards on just four carries, despite being the third leading rusher in the 2018 season with 89 yards per game.

## Winner: Punters

Quite possibly the biggest highlight of Super Bowl LIII was Ram’s punter Johnny Hekker breaking the record for longest punt in Super Bowl history with a 65-yard boot. As chance would have it, Patriots punter Ryan Allen previously held the record with a 64-yard kick from 2015. The two punters, who typically don’t see a lot of action due to their highly proficient scoring offenses, combined for 14 punts.

## Loser: The Fans

If you like defensive battles and old-fashioned football, this was the game for you. However, the lack of scoring and big plays made Super Bowl LIII a rather dull one for most. Following a Rams field goal in the 3rd quarter that tied the game at 3, it appeared that the game would begin to take off. Nonetheless, the next two drives were capped off by punts from both teams.

Unimpressed by the style of play, Dordt freshman Jonah Bader stopped watching the game to attend Dordt’s GIFT service. “I have never been one to get hype about the Super Bowl, and this game has only proven to me how boring it is,” Bader said.

## Winner: Community

Despite an otherwise forgettable game, Super Bowl LIII provided an opportunity for many people at Dordt and in the Sioux Center community to get together and enjoy each other’s company.

In addition to their evening service, First Reformed Church in Sioux Center hosted their first annual Super Bowl party. Beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the church’s Youth Family Life Center, attendees were able to watch the big game on three different screens. For those that chose not to watch, games such as Spikeball and nine-square were set up in the gym along with food.

At the half, testimonies from NFL athletes such as Kirk Cousins and Case Keenum were shown instead of the Maroon 5-led halftime show.

“Not all athletes are people necessarily I’d want my kids to look up to,” said Scott Te Stroete, one of the organizers for the event. “But there are some really cool athletes out there that are Christians that love Jesus.”

Te Stroete estimates that around 30 people attended the party, and hopes to see more people, especially college kids, next year.

# The ups of younger coaches: Dordt edition

Connor Van Hulzen -- Staff Writer

This offseason in the NFL, nine head coaches were hired. Inspired by the recent success of Rams head coach Sean McVay, who was hired at only 30 years old, NFL teams have opted to follow suit and hire young, offensively-talented coaches for their head coaching vacancies. The average age of the nine new hires this offseason is only 40 years old.

While 40 may still seem old to some, this recent movement to hiring ‘young’ head coaches is very new to the NFL, which has historically had coaches in their 50s and 60s being hired for vacant coaching positions. Most young coaches in the NFL are offensively focused while older coaches still maintain a heavy emphasis on the defensive side of the ball.

Unlike most NFL teams, Dordt Football’s coaching staff is comprised of coaches all under the age of 40. Granted, NAIA college football may be far from the NFL, but such a young coaching staff is still somewhat unusual.

Graduate Assistants (GA) are a key part of the football team’s ability to maintain such a young coaching staff. When the coaching staff identifies a former player who has graduated and who they believe could make an effective coach, they invite them to become a GA. While serving as a GA, a coach will finish up a master’s degree of their choice. The two years spent as a GA while finishing the degree serve as a sort of trial run and help determine if the GA will be hired to a full-time coaching position.

Special Teams Coordinator Brandon McCormick was a Graduate Assistant at Dordt before becoming a full-time coach.

“Because of [Head Coach] Penner, the transition from GA to coach wasn’t very different,” McCormick said. “In other programs,

a GA would operate as a manager and do the coaches’ grunt work. At Dordt, GA’s do end up doing some grunt work, but they also recruit and coach their own position.”

A major benefit of promoting GAs to coaches is the pre-existing relationship they have with players. Having previously played with the same players that they now coach provides a close bond which can help the coaches get more out of their players.

“The relationship with the players is a good,” Defensive Line Coach and current GA Griffin Pelot said. “Now, it’s more of a professional relationship, but the transition was easier because I was a leader and a captain on the team.”

Having former players go on to coach also helps with the relationships within the coaching staff. Those former players know what is expected of coaches and have experience working with the people who have now become their coworkers.

The results of the NFL’s youth coaching movement are yet to be seen. While those coaches struggle to find success on the world’s biggest stage, the young coaches here at Dordt are already leading the program to revolutionary new heights.



Contributed Photo

# Dordt track: a record-breaking indoor season

Sawyer Strelnieks -- Staff Writer



Contributed Photo

The Dordt Track and Field teams this season are looking strong as indoor nationals approach for the NAIA. With many returning national qualifiers from last year, Dordt is looking to have a robust presence at nationals at the end of this month.

Many members of the track and field team made their way onto the indoor honor roll with their quick times, long throws, and big jumps during this indoor season. Jenna Bremer, a senior in the weight throw, broke her old record from the previous season with a toss of 48 feet 2 1/4 inches.

On the men’s side of the weight throw, David Davelaar and Ike VanKempen broke the first and second place records for Dordt with throws of 59 feet 2 1/4 inches and 56 feet 8 1/2 inches.

“It’s been fun seeing the improvements from last season for the team, and how we’ve developed since the beginning of the season as well,” senior thrower Ike VanKempen said. “As the season goes on, more and more people are hitting marks and PRs as we go, and that’s always cool to see.”

Along with many of the throwers who have

broken records and qualified for nationals, many runners and jumpers have qualified for nationals with notable times. Eric Steiger, a freshman long distance runner, has been dominating on the track. Steiger qualified for nationals with a time of 15:05 in the 5K. He is also pursuing the standard time of 8:44 in the 3K run, which he missed a couple weeks ago by one second.

“With some incredibly talented people on the team though, I’m sure we’ll start to see more qualifications happening very soon,” said Steiger. “I think what I’m looking forward to the most about these events is just the strategic grind that they involve.”

Not many people think of running as a sport that requires strategic thinking. When on a 200-meter track with a bunch of guys running a long distance race, Steiger said that you have to plan when to pass runners and when to make your move.

Many relay teams from Dordt have also qualified for nationals for this season. Matthew Van Eps, a sophomore running mid-distance, is part of the men’s 4 X 800 meter relay going to nationals. Last year he qualified for nationals in the 4 X 800 meter relay and the 4 X 400 meter relay. This year, Van Eps also qualified in the individual 600 meter and 800 meter runs.

“Last year I was able to qualify in some relays, so it is definitely cool to qualify individually this year; however, I am still most looking forward to running in the relays,” said Van Eps. “Hopefully in the next couple of weeks with conference and nationals coming up everyone will be healthy and in top shape.”

These runners and throwers are a just a few among the many from the track team that have broken records and qualified for nationals this season. With a few meets still to come before indoor nationals, many athletes are still looking to find their spots for the big meet. NAIA preliminary races are February 28th at SDSU with final races occurring March 1st at SDSU.



(cont.) Trump delivers State of the Union Address

Continued from page 3

of the pregnancy, Trump asked Congress to pass a constitutional amendment that prohibits late-term abortions.

“Let us work together to build a culture that cherishes innocent life,” Trump said. “And let us reaffirm a fundamental truth: all children -- born and unborn -- are made in the holy image of God.”

This plea was met by long and raucous cheers from the right side of the aisle.

According to polls by CBS News, 56 percent of viewers believed that the speech would unite

the country. Many viewers supported Trump’s views on the border and foreign policy, with 72 percent of viewers supporting Trump’s views on the wall.

As Trump continues to push to get his legislative agenda passed in the newly divided Congress, time will tell if his speech will truly unite the country.

A big test of the speech’s effectiveness will be in the upcoming negotiations on a budget to keep the government open as another government shutdown looms in the coming weeks.



The 13th Annual PGFC Awards Ceremony is **Friday, February 22**. See all the films screened in the **Science Building** from **5:45-7:45pm**. The Awards Ceremony kicks off at **8pm in the BJ Haan**. This event is free and family friendly. Come see films made in only 48 hours. Come see who takes home this year’s “Best of Show!”

(cont.) why do students drop out?

Continued from page 3

Emily from the college, if she returned. Though she isn’t planning to return to Dordt – or any college – anytime soon, she can see herself eventually pursuing a degree in political science or nursing – a field she can “do good” in.

“Dordt’s out of the picture,” Emily said. “It

really is like a brick wall. There’s so many people, especially around here, that seem to think that trans people are gross or that we’re trying to peep on women. It’s super weird to me. I’m just trying to be me and be successful as myself. It’s a hard blow, and it definitely sucks... [but] it’s their right; they’re a private institution.”

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